

CD 2011--98/99

University of Toronto
Composers Concert

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New works by Arifin, Arnold, Caron,
Clements, Dupuis, Levasseur,
Maimets, O'Connor, Rizgar, Lee,
Scime, Sit, & Thornborrow

Tuesday, November 22 @ 7:30 PM
Walter Hall
free admission



PLEASE TURN ALL CELL PHONES OFF!

This does NOT mean turn them on Silent or Vibrate. This means turn them OFF! One might think texting during the concert is harmless but it is in fact a big problem. Your cell phone sends a wireless signal that interferes with the recording equipment used in Walter Hall. This means that hiss, pops, clicks, and other undesirable noise can be present on a recording and this is as a result of your cell phone. In extreme cases, it can render a recording absolutely unusable. Composers put a lot of work into a piece and at this stage of their careers, said piece may only be played once or twice. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE turn off your cell phones. Thank you.

Many thanks are due—to the composers for sharing their music, to their composition teachers for guidance, to all of the performers who give of their time to bring this new music to life, to Peter Olsen and Dennis Patrick for producing wonderful recordings, to others who help to put on the concert, and to the audience (!) for their time, attention and support.

Biographies

RIZGAR, A. is a second-year Music Theory major and Composition minor. He has studied composition with Professor Alexander Rapoport and is currently studying with Professor Chan Ka Nin.

FELIX ARIFIN is a Composition minor, majoring in Theory in third year. He has had the honor of studying with composers such as Sasha Rapoport, James Rolfe and Chan Ka Nin. He enjoys quiet walks, contemplative moments of serenity and smiling throughout the whole day.

CHRIS ARNOLD is in his third year at the University of Toronto studying composition with Sasha Rapoport and viola with Katherine Rapoport. For the past two years, he has participated in the Contemporary Showcase Festival and last year, won the Samuel Dolin Memorial Award.

JASON CARON is from the precise middle of a vast nowhere, Thunder Bay in Northwestern Ontario. He completed his Bachelor of Music at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, and is currently studying very happily (if a little over-caffeinated on occasion) at the University of Toronto. He began at Lakehead as a Trombone major, but switched to Composition halfway through to study with Dr. Aris Carastathis, a former student of Dr. Dinos Constantanides. He is currently studying composition with Dr. Norbert Palej, and hopes to further explore the rich musical culture of Toronto. Some of his favourite albums include Master of Reality, In the Court of the Crimson King, The White Album, Fresh Fruit For Rotting Vegetables, Mingus Ah Um, Age of Winters, Terrifyer, Holy Mountain, and many more. An avid amateur pâtissier, his specialties include cheesecake, brownies, and cupcakes.

JEFF CLEMENTS is in his third year studying composition at the University of Toronto. He is currently studying with Norbert Palej and has studied with Sasha Rapoport and James Rolfe in the past. He recently began studying bassoon with Nadina Mackie Jackson and has performed with ensembles such as the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the University of Toronto Wind Ensemble and the North York Community Orchestra. Although Jeff plans on pursuing composition after his undergraduate degree, he intends on continuing his studies with the bassoon.

SOPHIE DUPUIS is a first year master's student studying composition with Gary Kulesha. She completed her undergraduate degree in composition at Dalhousie University.

SOHYOON MONICA LEE is in the third year of the composition program. She has studied with Alexander Rapoport and Larisa Kuzmenko, and is currently studying with Professor Chan Ka Nin.

PAUL LEVASSEUR is a father and a composer and loves being both.

JAMES LOWRIE is a third year music student. He is currently studying composition with Christos Hatzis and guitar with Eli Kassner.

The music of RIHO ESKO MAIMETS has been described as "enchantingly beautiful" and having a "unique emotional and communicative impact." His composition studies began in 2004 at the Claude Watson Program at Earl Haig Secondary School in Toronto, Canada, with the strings teacher, Alan Torok. Riho went on to study composition at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in Tallinn, Estonia, under the tutelage of Helena Tulve and René Eespere. This year, Riho was awarded the highSCORE prize 2011 in Pavia Italy and more recently, the 2011 Karen Kieser Prize in Canadian Music. He was also selected as the youngest of four Canadian composers under the age of 35 to write a work for the Ensemble Contemporain de Montréal within the framework of the Générations 2012 project. Riho's music has been performed in Canada, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Latvia and the United States. He is currently pursuing graduate studies in composition at the University of Toronto under the instruction of Christos Hatzis.

JORDAN O'CONNOR is a third year undergraduate student studying composition with Alexander Rapoport.

ADAM SCIME is an emerging composer living in Toronto. Though early in his career, Adam has received numerous performances by Canadian and international soloists and ensembles. Most recently, Adam was selected to participate in the Chrysalis Composers Workshop with the Continuum Contemporary Ensemble, during which his piece "Fixity" was performed under the baton of Christopher Butterfield. In the summer of 2010, it was announced that Adam's piece "Vagues, a Prelude for Piano and Electronics" was selected as the winning composition for the Electro-Acoustic Composers Competition hosted by acclaimed American pianist Keith Kirchoff. Subsequently, Mr. Kirchoff performed "Vagues" as part of his 2011 North American Tour. In January of 2011, renowned Canadian soloist Nadina Mackie Jackson premiered Adam's "Concerto for Bassoon, Electronics, and Chamber Orchestra" with the GamUT new music ensemble. This concerto was commissioned during Adam's residency with the GamUT ensemble during 2010/2011. Recently, New Music Concerts programmed Adam's piece, "After the riot" for a concert dedicated to the music of Jonathan Harvey. During the summer of 2011, Adam participated in the National Arts Centre Composer training program to study with Composers Colin Matthews and Gary Kulesha as an apprentice. Future projects include commissions from The Jumblies Theatre Company and New Music Concerts for the 2011/2012

concert season. Adam is in the process of completing his Doctorate at the University of Toronto where he studies with Gary Kulesha.

JANET SIT is in the final year of the Bachelor of Music in Composition program at the University of Toronto. Her teachers include Alexander Rapoport, Norbert Palej, and Brian McDonagh; she has also received advice on her work from Roger Reynolds and Chen Yi. Over the summer, she participated in the 1st Beijing International Composition Workshop at the Beijing Central Conservatory of Music in China, where she premiered a chamber piece, *Returning*, written for the workshop. During this program, visiting composers Eric Moe, James Mobberley, and Chen Yi alongside Conservatory faculty reviewed and advised her musical works in masterclasses and private sessions. Janet also holds a B. Science in Zoology from the University of Toronto and an ARCT in Piano Performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music. She very much hopes to combine her multicultural background, music, and animals in future studies. In her spare moments, she enjoys yoga, perfecting meatloaf recipes, and reading about sea mammals.

CHRIS THORNBORROW's varied interests have led him to an eclectic array of music related endeavours that include concert music, film, theatre, and education. He is the co-founder of the Toy Piano Composers, a collective that collaborates with musicians and ensembles to put on new music concerts. His music has been played in Canada and the United States, and the award-winning films he has scored have screened in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Milan. He is a Doctoral student at the University of Toronto.

Programme

Track 1
on Disc 2

Before she woke up, she danced
CHRIS THORNBORROW (b. 1983)

Katherine Watson, Flute
Michelle Hwu, Percussion
Wesley Shen, Piano
Adam Scime, Double Bass

Disc 1.

Fins of Air

FELIX ARIFIN

1. i. Andante ii. Allegro iii. Moderato

2. ~~Rosalind Zhang, Cello~~

3. ~~Stelth Ng, Violin~~

Felix Arifin, Piano

4.

Prelude and Allegro

JEFF CLEMENTS (b. 1991)

Jeff Clements, Bassoon
Young-Ah Bang, Piano

5. **Zagros**
RIZGAR.A. (b. 1977)
Dayoung Seo, Cello
David Debono, Piano

6. **Invention and Toccata**
SOPHIE DUPUIS (b.1988)
7. i. Invention ii. Toccata
Wesley Shen, Piano

8. **Rilke Fragments II**
ADAM SCIME

9. **Baby Songs: To my Son, Jeremiah Joachim**
10. i. Good Morning ii. Playtime iii. Pabulum
11. iv. Diaper Change v. Bathtime vi. Lullabye
12. PAUL EMIL LEVASSEUR (b. 1979)
13. Paul Anthony Williamson, Tenor
14. Zhenya Yesmenovich, Piano

PAUSE

PLEASE JOIN US IN THE LOBBY FOR REFRESHMENTS

Disc 2 1. *Thorn borrow*

2. **Rampant Growth**
CHRIS ARNOLD (b. 1991)
Stelth Ng, Violin
Wes Khurana, Violin
Matt Antal, Viola
Michael Lam, Cello

3. **Jagged Satin**
SOHYOON MONICA LEE (b. 1991)
Jaeyun Chung, Flute
Chieh Ying Lu, Oboe
Hyunjoo Choi, Clarinet
Jeff Clements, Bassoon

4. **Rhapsody**
JASON CARON (b. 1989)
Dale Sorensen, Trombone
Florence Mak, Piano

5. Of dreams and letters: two songs from the sonnets of C. Rossetti and E. Barrett-Browning

i. Sonnet III. I dream of you to wake

JANET SIT (b. 1981)

Leslie Bickle, Soprano

Samantha Tsang, Piano

6. Possessing a weapon has made me bashful
in this economy of sentiment analysis

JAMES LOWRIE (b. 1990)

Saman Shahi, Piano

Patrick Power, Guitar

7. Tuba King (of everything)

JORDAN O'CONNOR

Eric Probst, Tuba

Florence Mak, Piano

8. I will remain faithful

RIHO ESKO MAIMETS (b. 1988)

Wesley Shen, Piano

Programme Notes

Before she woke up, she danced is inspired by the humour and absurdity of dream experiences. The flute navigates the sound-world offered by the other three instrumentalists. It sifts through fragmented, angular melodies, building and soaring to a joyful conclusion. This piece was commissioned by, and is dedicated to Katherine.

Fins of Air is a pun on my last name, so I wouldn't say it should be taken super seriously. That being said, it's a light and refreshing work that should refresh one's palette.

Prelude and Allegro consists of a short, dark prelude followed by a quirky, energetic allegro.

Zagros is the name of the largest mountain range dominating western Iran, and the North Eastern of Iraqi Kurdistan. Another designation is Kurdish Mountains. The name Zagros, comes from the Zagarthian people, probably of European ancestry. These mountains have witnessed the loss of many innocent lives. This piece is my tribute to the victims of the Kurdish genocide.

Invention and Toccata explores whole-tone scales and chromaticism, developing the thematic ideas in a rather conventional form.

Rilke Fragments II:

Master do you hear the New?
rumbling and quaking?
Harbingers arrive
to proclaim its reign.

Surely no hearing can be whole
in this incessant clamor,
yet every part of the machine
demands praise.

Behold the Machine:
how it rolls and wreaks vengeance
and drains and deforms us.

Yet since it receives strength from us,
let it without vehemence
drive and serve.

—Rainer Maria Rilke

Baby Songs. When Jeremiah was born, I found myself singing fragments of melodies to him along with silly lyrics. My wife was bathing Jeremiah one day when she made an odd request, "write Jeremiah a bath song." I brushed her off but within five minutes, I was surprised to hear a full song in my head. I sang the music to my wife and it became wedged firmly in our memories. In fact, it refused to budge from there; it stayed put stubbornly, all the way from Winnipeg to Toronto. When we arrived, Paul W, a close friend of mine (and brilliant singer), invited us to his apartment. We told him about the bath song and he announced that I should compose him a song cycle about babies. He promptly burst into song, singing "Pabulum, Pabulum, give me more, give me MOOOORE!!" My mind wandered back to those short melodies with lyrics I would sing to Jeremiah. That day, the Baby Song cycle was born. These songs are funny, but they are not intended as a joke. Rather, they are a tender reflection on the experiences of a loving new father.

Rampant Growth is a single-movement quartet whose central focus is about acceleration and jerk-motion. As a result, the end is at least 2048 times faster than the beginning.

Jagged Satin is in modified sonata form with two distinctive themes that illustrate a musical oxymoron. Although the textures of the themes may be quite contrasting, they are combined to be cohesive and coherent.

Rhapsody for Trombone and Piano is purely absolute music; music for music's sake. It showcases the trombone in a role that it does not get to fill very often, and indeed, many people think it is incapable of; the piece is very lyrical and melodic. When needed, the trombone is very up to the task, as you will hear when it is floating gracefully atop gentle, shimmering chords. Rhapsody, although a somewhat nondescript name for our imaginative and florid times, was chosen carefully. In strict definition, a rhapsody is a one-movement work that is episodic yet integrated, and free-flowing in structure, featuring a range of highly contrasted moods, colour and tonality. Enjoy the simple, thematic statement in the opening bar as it is taken through a variety of sonorous and emotional states.

Of dreams and letters is a set of two short songs from the sonnets of Christina Rossetti and Elizabeth Barrett-Browning. In the preface to Rossetti's *Monna Innominata* (the Unnamed Woman) sonnets, the author explained that female in literature, such as Dante's *Beatrice* and Petrarch's

Laura, while glorified, were lacking in self-expression. By writing the *Monna*, she hoped to give these figures a voice. Rossetti also mentioned Barrett-Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, providing a link between these two Victorian poets. Barrett-Browning's *Sonnets* contained a collection of forty-four love sonnets written before her marriage to Robert Browning.

Sonnet III. I dream of you to wake,
 from Christina Rossetti's *Monna Innominata*
 O ombre vane, fuor che ne l'aspetto! - Dante
 Immaginata guida la conduce. - Petrarca
 I dream of you to wake: would that I might
 Dream of you and not wake but slumber on;
 Nor find with dreams the dear companion gone,
 As summer ended summer birds take flight.
 In happy dreams I hold you full in sight,
 I blush again who waking look so wan;
 Brighter than sunniest day that ever shone,
 In happy dreams your smile makes day of night.
 Thus only in a dream we are at one,
 Thus only in a dream we give and take
 The faith that maketh rich who take or give;
 If thus to sleep is sweeter than to wake,
 To die were surely sweeter than to live,
 Though there be nothing new beneath the sun.

Possessing a weapon has made me bashful in this economy of sentiment analysis. In Roberto Bolano's 2666, there is a discussion of Panthophobia and Phobophobia. The book posits the idea that fear of fear is worse than fear of everything. If this is so, then why is "the only thing to fear is fear itself" considered an optimistic idiom? Perhaps all idioms experience a redshift towards optimism with time. That is how we can tell how far away from us they are. However, we must not rest on our idiomatic laurels, or our laurel-worthy idioms. (In the government, there is an organization that studies social media to keep track of how everyone is feeling. They often make graphs.)

As a double bassist myself I wrote *Tuba King* out of a desire to compose a work for a fellow bass instrument. This majestic instrument is capable of such force and expressiveness; who doesn't have some tuba envy? This is a lyrical and I hope humorous short piece, embracing the boisterous and majestic qualities of the instrument. Originally coupled with another piece, these shorter works were intended as accessible "new works" showcasing the many lyric qualities of the tuba. The work is a transforming variation on a central motive, which is developed and set in different dramatic contexts. Once a new *character* of a given variation is realized either a new development emerges or a return to earlier material, which supplies the structural underpinning to the work. Working with Eric and Florence has been invaluable. Their encouragement during the rehearsal and re-writing process helped me to cut the weaker ideas and embolden the stronger. And finally, Sasha's enthusiasm and insight into the works potential was infectious, motivating me to develop the work in a more integral way.

I will remain faithful was commissioned by the Toronto chapter of the Estonian Academic Women's Society for their 100th jubilee celebrations. I was asked to draw inspiration for the piece from the poem *Mu juurde voogas* by poetess Betti Alver (an honoured member of the organization), which describes love in eternal terms. "I will remain faithful" is the last line of the poem in translation.